



Quarterly News-Letter

The Book Club of California

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Collecting Aldous Huxley

by August Brandenburg

MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS of collecting have left me with filled shelves and boxes, and also with stories that occurred along the way and enhanced the experience. I collected books by Aldous Huxley (1894–1963) and related materials. “Related materials” became an open-ended category defined by the amount and range of Huxley’s work and the miscellaneous related things one finds by chance.

There is a welter of bibliographical references for Huxley, with varying degrees of completeness, accuracy, and overlap. A dealer who provided a small number of my nicer acquisitions said on several occasions that he thought I should do a proper bibliography for Huxley. Some of the bibliographical matters are a little complicated, as with *A Virgin Heart*, which Huxley translated from the French, and *They Still Draw Pictures!* I don’t plan to try to resolve all this, but just to relate some of the stories as a collector. The stories are worth telling, with no need to moralize.

I’ll nevertheless begin with a story that for me resolved a question about one man’s character. I was browsing in a store owned by a man who, I was aware, was blamed by a rival bookseller for being somehow behind thefts of merchandise for stock; at least that was the story that was going around. I discovered taped to the shelf fixture at the end of an aisle a small black and white glossy publicity photo of Huxley and felt the collector’s compulsion to own it. I asked the store owner how much he wanted for the picture. He went over to it, carefully pulled it away and peeled off the tape. He handed the picture to me and said, “I’ve enjoyed this for fifteen years. If you want it, it’s yours.” We talked about Huxley, and he said that Huxley was “one of the irreplaceables,” thereby confirming that the photo was a thing of value to him. I thought to myself that a man who so easily shares something of value is not a man who steals books from his competitors.

Knowing that there are numerous Huxley collections in institutional libraries, I once sent letters to about a dozen such libraries asking what they could tell me about the contents of their collections. This was certainly a brazen attempt to get

detailed information without leaving my arm chair, but through the generosity of most of the libraries I got very decent replies back quickly. However, one library, at a Midwestern university, did not respond for a few months, leading me to think that they were ignoring me. One day I was surprised to receive from that library an eight-page typed listing (photocopy), titles listed from the top of the first page through the last, in no logical order or grouping. Someone had sat down at a typewriter and typed until the books, cards, or whatever ran out, and sent the list; an obviously inefficient use of someone's time. The doubt induced by the wait for a reply was lifted. But days later, I received a letter from the man who had donated the books to the university, indicating that one of the librarians had told him of my inquiry and offering his help if I had any further need. This of course led to an exchange of letters. I think any collector must be interested in a rival: not just what is in the rival's collection, but what sort of person the rival is. (I suspect that this is as genteel a sort of rivalry as one is ever likely to find.) Here I found a man who had numerous collections and donated some (but not all) of them upon retirement from work, thereafter concentrating on the collections he kept, giving lectures about the subject area of one of the collections. The correspondence did not continue long but was an unexpected reward for my questionnaire project.

Sometimes a person is driven to accept representation in the collection by a poor substitute. *A Day in Windsor*, published in England in 1953, is a book I have never seen in the original – anywhere. I have never seen it in another collection. I had to go to a college library and make wet process copies at a microfilm reader. I don't even know where the microfilmed original was. The book is not held to be a major work of Huxley's; most people have never heard of it. I don't recall ever seeing it in a dealer's catalogue. Where are the copies?

A dealer offered me a copy of *Joyce the Artificer*, which contains a piece on Huxley by James Joyce. The asking price was awfully high, I felt. The item was being sold out of a Joyce collection by another dealer, so there was the other dealer's asking price plus the amount added on by my dealer. I balked, saying that there were ninety copies printed; other copies must be around. The dealer said, "Where are they?" I bought the thing.

Occasionally a dealer would seem to have come to think of me as a ready source of revenue. This happened to me probably several times. One dealer offered me a copy of the D. H. Lawrence letters with the Huxley introduction; this was the vellum-bound limited edition, priced certainly at the market. With the offer came

the plaintive hint that he hoped I could remit right away. I have never put off paying a dealer. Another dealer offered an item she thought I would like even if I did already have another copy, and said that she really needed to sell it to help get her son started at school; one does not usually see this far into a dealer's life and needs.

Unique items test one's collecting definitions. A group of leather-bound copies of Huxley's books of the 1920s given him by his American publisher of that period was acquired from the dealer who throughout my collecting career has been my single greatest source. There was only one important one missing: *Point Counter Point*. One either buys them or doesn't. (I did.) Other collections have unique items I'll forever envy but are probably where they should be: the typescript of *Brave New World* at the University of Texas, a sketchbook at Stanford, important letters here and there, and so on.

An interesting special story concerns *Tyranny Over the Mind*, a supplement for the *Newsday* newspaper in 1958. As part of a newspaper, this was printed on newsprint – truly ephemeral. Obviously, many copies were around. Although I see very few dealers' catalogues these days, I don't recall seeing this often catalogued. As one friend of mine once said, this is the kind of thing that is now put on micro-film. Fortunately, I have several copies, two of them gifts from friends who had them put away and thought that they belonged with me. I love the generosity of friends like that, and certainly agree with their judgment.

One hears the anecdotes from people who had known, met, or otherwise dealt with Huxley. David Magee, a man of ebullient wit everyone could appreciate, told me of the lecture that Huxley gave for the Friends of the Library. Magee watched as Huxley glanced occasionally at a few sheets of paper and decided that he had to get a look at those notes. The sheets were blank. Huxley said that he found people expected him to speak from notes, and so he was complying.

Movie scripts are problematic. Scripts change through various stages of the process; it becomes somewhat difficult to know exactly what one has. I do have a few scripts – *Jane Eyre*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *A Woman's Vengeance* – but they do not necessarily represent the realized film. Also, the provenance of a script becomes a matter of interest. It is not always clear whether one has a legitimate possession. They are not widely traded. My only answer to these uncertainties has been to deal only with someone I have found to be generally professional, scrupulous, and careful.

Some years ago on a family weekend trip, I visited the MGM Grand casino in

Reno, Nevada. Not being an experienced gambler, I tried a slot machine and immediately lost most of my pocket change – about eighty-five cents, if I recall. Having decided that gambling was not one of my skills, I took a leisurely walk in an arcade of shops on the lower level – merely looking, without any expectation of finding anything worthwhile. There was a store that stocked paper products – not stationery, but things like posters and a miscellany that I do not recall exactly. But there was a bin in that store that contained old magazines; I can't resist looking closer at something like that, and behold: there were several copies of *Bookman* magazine from the 1920s which were rubber-stamped for the MGM Archives, Culver City, and priced nominally. These contained Huxley essays later included in his book *Jesting Pilate*. In perhaps the last place one would think to look in Reno, I found a few things to add to the Huxley collection and felt that the gambling losses were essentially recouped.

Other stories are more equivocal. I bought a copy of *Holy Face*, one of the less common Huxley items, from a dealer's catalogue at what seemed to be a reasonable price. The book turned out to be not only ex-library, but looked as though it still belonged at the library. I thought that this needed following up: either the book should be returned or I could perhaps legitimize it for use as a reading copy. I wrote to the college library and got back a reply that suggested there was indeed a question about the book's status; for a fee (I believe ten dollars) remitted they would send back a notification that my possession was free of any question. I did remit and received the promised document. Of course I have kept the paperwork. But certainly this was my murkiest transaction.

Another time I received a catalogue for a forthcoming auction which included Huxley items. The catalogue appeared competent, and I did not have the time to view the items. I bid the indicated prices and got the items. They turned out not really to be in the condition the catalogue had indicated, and it seemed clear why I had won my bid. I felt deceived: an evidently competent cataloguer had over-described the offerings. *Caveat emptor*. Never again did I do business with that auction house.

Sometimes areas of interest overlap: not necessarily associations of people, but things found in one collection that relate to another. This happened with a collection of books and miscellaneous items acquired by the dealer I referred to above as my most productive source. In papers that came with the library of a college

professor was a file of transcriptions of a couple of letters from Huxley and some notes made about Huxley by the recipient. Not primary materials, certainly, but definitely of interest.

Similarly, the same dealer had some materials relating to Huxley's brother Julian, among which was a file containing a photo of Huxley and a transmittal letter from Huxley's second wife. The photo and letter are now in my collection.

Reprints and piracies also surface. Some reprints were done by reprint houses and resemble the original editions except that they show up in paper wrappers. They may contain inside captions that identify the reprint house, or they may not. I have several in my collection, bought originally as reading copies and kept because I felt that they were an interesting phenomenon in and of themselves. I have seen a number of piracies said to have been done in Asia. In paper, layout, printing, and binding they did not look like English or American books, but might have been taken for original editions because there was clearly no attempt by those producing them to indicate otherwise. They were not facsimiles of English or American editions. I don't have any in my collection, having refused a few that were priced higher than I thought would make purchase sensible; I have no particular interest in them.

One booklet written by Huxley requires a collector to purchase another writer's booklet written in response. Huxley's *What Are You Going to Do About It? The Case for Constructive Peace*, a pacifist tract published in 1936, was promptly responded to by C. Day Lewis with *We're Not Going to do Nothing*. Stubbornly defining one's collection limits to exclude Day Lewis's reply would be to overlook part of a story.

I have some letters written by Huxley, none of them major. The major letters seem all to be in institutional collections, which is no doubt as it should be. The letters I do have are supplemented by a small file of photocopies of letters offered to me by dealers over the years; I declined those letters, but kept the photocopies for content and to enhance my record of Huxley's writing characteristics. The *Letters* volume is rich reading, but one does not see therein some of the physical things that distinguish Huxley's letters.

An awkward area is that of books from Huxley's own library. Huxley was known to have sold books from his collection once in preparation for moving; these books can be identified by a sticker the dealer used for the occasion. I have

seen a number of books that might have been in Huxley's library after that time, but there is no reasonable degree of certainty that they were. Inscriptions to Huxley have led dealers to offer books to me as having been owned by Huxley; I have bought two, allowing for the possibility that they might have been. Certainly one is interested in knowing what his author's reading was, and additionally to have at hand the very copies themselves – especially if notations appear. The *Letters* volume, again, with the essays, helps to identify some of Huxley's reading. Beyond that, I suspect we have to rely on scholars who have dug more deeply than I have.

Contributions of other collectors were truly heartwarming. Two or three times I have had acquaintances who collected other subject areas present good additions to my Huxley collection. These were not gifts, of course, but the point is that someone with some sophistication made discriminating judgments at the right time and led me to make acquisitions I would not otherwise have known about. This was a special kind of thoughtfulness.

Several books published in recent years treat the psychology of collecting. I have found them interesting but none entirely satisfying. I'm not at all sure why they haven't satisfied me. I know that my reason for settling on Huxley as a proj-

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ect was that I had been surprised at the scope and amount of his work, so much of which was not widely known – aspects that seemed to constitute a justification for bringing the various things together in a collection; this does little to explain the psychological reasons why one does this. I remember Franklin Gilliam at Brick Row saying more than once that Huxley was not neglected by collectors.

So, I am left with the collection, the stories, and the questions about why one collects. My collection is large but not complete. I no longer seek the things that would fill the gaps; most of the gaps are not major, and would be filled routinely. I haven't answered the last question, of how one disposes of the collection. I merely live with mine.

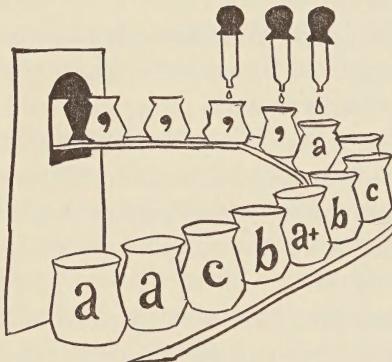


Illustration by Ivar Diehl inspired by *Brave New World*.

AUGUST BRANDENBURG is a retired American Trust Company-Wells Fargo Bank auditor. He has a virtually complete collection of Aldous Huxley's printed works, plus ephemera, and many volumes on Huxley's circle. He was a member of the Book Club of California for many years.

The Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies at San Jose State University

by Jack Douglas

THE BEETHOVEN CENTER at San Jose State University was established in 1983 with the gift of a collection of seventy-five first editions of Beethoven's music by Ira F. Brilliant, a Phoenix, Arizona, real estate developer. The University administration, with the aid of Mr. Brilliant, determined to make more of this gift than merely to house it as another special collection in the University Library. Now the collection, regularly added to by Mr. Brilliant, has become the focus for a center for the study of Beethoven's music and humanitarian accomplishments. It is the only such institution in North America.

Under the direction of Dr. William Meredith, the Center has evolved into a multifaceted institution that offers a variety of activities relating to the life and times of the great German master. In addition to the largest collection of first (300) and early nineteenth-century editions (2,000) of Beethoven's music outside of Europe, the Center encompasses a library of over thirty-five hundred books on Beethoven in many languages, a large collection of recordings and videos, a stamp collection, art works, and a lock of Beethoven's hair. The acquisition of the Master's hair and the subsequent analysis of it received widespread attention in the press and resulted in the publication of Russell Martin's book *Beethoven's Hair: An Extraordinary Historical Odyssey and a Scientific Mystery Solved*. Martin's book is being made into a documentary film by the Toronto film company Rhombus Media, one of the creators of the well-known film *The Red Violin*. The Center and its director have also been featured in documentaries produced by the BBC and A&E.

The University supports the Center's staff and facilities, but the activities of the program are the responsibility of the American Beethoven Society, a non-profit organization whose international membership includes leading scholars, musicians, and ordinary music lovers. Money from membership, donations, and grants supports the publication of the twice-yearly *Beethoven Journal*, the Beethoven in

the Schools program, the Young Pianists Competition and master classes, and numerous concerts, lectures, and other programs.

Perhaps its most important contribution to scholarship is its Beethoven Bibliography Database. This resource, available to everyone on the Internet, is the most extensive research tool compiled on a musical subject and is continually brought up to date as new entries occur. Currently the Database contains entries for over seventeen thousand articles and books. Researchers may locate citations for studies of the composer's deafness, his views on other composers, his library, individual works, his influence on Brahms, performances of his work around the world since his day, and thousands of other topics. This sophisticated and easy-to-use Database was created with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, the American Beethoven Society, and other agencies.

The Center owns three keyboard instruments widely used during the Classical period: an original 1827 fortepiano made by Mathias Jakesch in Vienna, a reproduction of the 1795 Dulcken fortepiano in the Smithsonian Museum made by Janine Johnson and Paul Poletti in 1985, and a German replica of an eighteenth-century clavichord (one of the keyboard instruments the composer played as a child). Internationally known fortepianists such as Malcolm Bilson regularly perform on these period instruments, bringing to life the sound of Beethoven's music on the instruments of his day.

With the University of Nebraska Press, the Center and the American Beethoven Society sponsor a series of scholarly monographs titled *North American Beethoven Studies*. Important publications in the series include Theodore Albrecht's *Letters to Beethoven and Other Correspondence* (three volumes), and the four-volume set, *The Reception of Beethoven's Music by his German Contemporaries*, edited by Wayne Senner, Robin Wallace, and William Meredith. Forthcoming volumes include studies on Beethoven's music by renowned Beethoven scholars Owen Jander and Bathia Churgin.

The Center provides exhibit materials for performing arts institutions and universities around the United States. Recent exhibits have complemented performances and symposia in New York at Merkin Hall, the Phoenix Symphony, Humanities West in San Francisco, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and the Bowers Art Museum in Santa Ana, California.

In the summer of 2003, the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies joined

the University's Steinbeck Center and other special collections on the fifth floor of the new nine-story Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior, Library of the University.

For those seeking more information regarding hours, programs, Society membership, and the like, write to the Center at: One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0171, or telephone (408) 808-2058, fax (408) 808-2060. Or find it on the Internet at www.sjsu.edu/depts/beethoven

JACK DOUGLAS, emeritus professor and former head of San Jose State University Special Collections, is a member of the Book Club of California and the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco.

Reviews

Water Bachinski, *CIRCUS. Five Poems on the Circus*. Designed by Walter Bachinski and Janice Butler. Shanty Bay Press, Shanty Bay, Ontario, Canada, 2002.

Outstanding examples of artist's books with original illustrations colored by means of stencils, known as "pochoir," are few and far between. What I mean by an outstanding artist's book is one in which the suitability and treatment of text, the quality of the letterpress printing, the style of the illustrations, the paper, and even the elegance of the binding are such that one realizes – ah! – here is a book which is a work of art destined to become a classic. Those of you familiar with Henri Matisse's *Jazz* will understand what I mean when I say that Walter Bachinski's *CIRCUS* is such a book – and, what's more, that it can stand proudly by the best examples of classical pochoir. Walter Bachinski, who is internationally known as a sculptor, artist, and printmaker, has taught printmaking and book arts at Guelph University, Ontario, Canada, for many years. He lives in the town of Shanty Bay in the province of Ontario and has named his press The Shanty Bay Press. There he works with his partner, Janis Butler, also an experienced printer and printmaker.* *CIRCUS* is their first book in "pochoir." They are now working on a second and third book to be illustrated by his designs colored with stencils and adorned with colored woodblocks.

CIRCUS was some ten years in the making. "The main difficulty with pochoir," says Walter Bachinski, "is the time it takes." Indeed, one has to draw the

* Shanty Bay Press, RR2, Shanty Bay, Ontario, 2LO, Canada; or by email: walter.bachinski@sympatico.ca

motifs, establish the color scheme, cut as many stencils as colors are to be used, and only then, slowly and carefully, apply the pigments through the stencil onto the paper with special stubby brushes. Layer by layer the picture comes alive. According to California's Vance Gerry, pochoir is a "backbreaking" process. For *CIRCUS*, Walter Bachinski cut eight to ten Mylar stencils for each of six large illustrations, and then many more for smaller illustrations, initials, titles, etc. After completing the designs, Bachinski spent fifteen months applying the colors. But he achieved a masterpiece.

In addition to using round stencil brushes, Bachinski hand-colored the very fine details using a tiny watercolor brush. His color schemes are bold. The acrylic pigments are dense and bright. Bachinski explains:

I tried a number of paint possibilities including gouache and watercolor but in the end acrylic was my choice. I could layer the color, as I had to sometimes go over a particular stencil area 3 or 4 times to achieve the density and saturation of color I wanted. I did experiment with a number of different brands of acrylic and found that the Golden brand Heavy Body Acrylics were superior.**

There is always a certain amount of difficulty with the build-up of pigments under the stencils. This requires, particularly in areas needing a heavy application of paint, that the stencils be lifted and cleaned after every four or five applications. Following this method Bachinski achieved an intensity of color and light reminiscent of the garish glare of flood-lights under the Big Top. We are treated to the nightmarish magic of circus routine.

In addition to the six large pochoir compositions, five two-color woodcuts decorate the half-title page preceding the main text of the book, five poems dealing with "aspects & ideas associated with the word *circus...*," a world in which all events are "underscored by the threat of danger, even death." The actions performed by Harlequin or by the Saltimbanques are superimposed on the ominous black shadow of a skull. All actions are equivocal. Sadness and laughter commingle. We are reminded of Picasso's melancholic clowns. Acrobats are suspended from their safety net and hover above an assembly of black elephants. Death and love are expressed in a bouquet of flowers, a wistful, simple gesture....

** Walter Bachinski, "The Tao of Repetitive Tasks," in *Parenthesis, The Journal of the Fine Press Book Association*, Number 7, November 2002, pp. 17-20.

But to return to the subtleties of pochoir. The pigments must not be too wet; they must lie on top of the paper. In the case of Matisse's *Jazz*, for example, the "soft" finish of the woven Arches paper allowed the pigments to convey the visual qualities of velvet. In *CIRCUS* the colors shine, almost as if laminated to the thick Zerkall paper. Primary colors, reds and blues, establish an atmosphere of gaiety. Blacks frame and define areas of shadow and mystery. Diamond patterns remind us that Harlequin is always the main character in this comedy, this tragedy. A circus's black net (a pattern similar to one of Matisse's) juxtaposes the flat black with dramatic yellows and oranges.

Turning the pages of *CIRCUS* is like walking through an exhibition. Reading the five poems slows us and makes us appreciate, understand the painted images. How to read this book? Here are D. H. Lawrence's "When I Went to the Circus," Gwendolyn MacEwan's "Circus," Rainer Maria Rilke's "Fifth Elegy" (from his *Duino Elegies*), P. K. Page's "Puppets," and, lastly, "The Circus" by Kenneth Koch. These are not poems to be taken lightly. Rilke's dark poem, for instance, is of such gravity, such intensity, that after a few lines one may have to stop and gain composure by looking again at the illustrations.

Walter Bachinski wrote his own Preface, discussing his debt to Picasso. Crispin Elsted, owner of the Barbarian Press, wrote a charming autobiographical Afterword, letting us see moments of his childhood, his discovery of what circuses are all about.

Like the Big Top, *CIRCUS* is impressive in size, 18 by 13 inches. It's a hefty book to hold and a magnificent book to behold. It was printed at the Shanty Bay Press on dampened 250 gsm Zerkall Litho paper. Janis Butler was responsible for the typesetting, the actual printing, and the attractive binding—a combination of red and blue Bradel binding sheets sewn onto tapes, sewn headbands, a blue cloth spine with a red-on-blue pochoir title, and boards covered with Japanese paper printed with a diamond pattern. *CIRCUS* comes housed in a vibrant red cloth-covered slip case.

Bachinski tells us he was inspired by Picasso's famous *Family of Saltimbanques*, now at the National Gallery, Washington, D. C. Around 1904–1905, after Picasso abandoned his Blue Period style and embarked on what art historians call his Rose Period, he was in regular nightly attendance at the Cirque Medrano. Clowns and circus folk became his main theme. Picasso was smitten by the Romantic, the

vagabond world of Harlequin – those “fleeting” acrobats so gently examined in Rainer Maria Rilke’s *Duino Elegies*, written in 1922.

Harlequin, the trickster emerging from the realm of death, has been considered to be the ferryman to the other world. The “mute rites” of the circus preserve, under layers of gaiety, under their travesty and degradation, a sort of half-forgotten, ancient, and sacred terror. But is not Harlequin also a survivor? Did not Rilke see, and write about, the Harlequin/Petroushka which comes alive in Stravinsky’s famous ballet? Petroushka rises triumphantly over the Theatre of Life. We see a dramatic Harlequin on the title page of *CIRCUS* emerging from the skull of death, and we see again a gentler Harlequin bidding us adieu at the base of the colophon page. But let us read Rilke’s numinous poem, which dares to ask:

*But tell me
who are they
these vagabonds
even more transient
than we are?
urged on from childhood
twisted (for whose sake?)
by some will
that is never content?*

Sixty-five copies of *CIRCUS* were made: sixty were meant for sale. My copy arrived one rainy April day when helicopters swarmed above San Francisco as students and neighbors filled the streets in anguish to demonstrate against a war they did not condone but could not stop. It seemed to me that day that my country and perhaps the whole world had irrevocably lost its focus. Then opening my new book and considering its text and pictures, it occurred to me that the noise and horror of this awesome conflict will eventually pass – but that, as it has been ever since mankind’s earliest days, the hand of the artist and the voice of the poet will continue to define who and what we human beings really are. And that’s what Harlequin’s message is all about.

DR. ADELA SPINDLER ROATCAP

Historic Spots in California, revised by Douglas E. Kyle (Fifth Edition, Stanford University Press, 2002), 681 pp. \$75 cloth; \$34.95 paper.

In 1990, Douglas E. Kyle produced the fourth edition of this classic work so often referred to as "Hoover & Rensch" and with the 2002 edition, continues to make it relevant. *Historic Spots* grew out of the 1930s when Hero Eugene Rensch, Ethel Grace Rensch, and her sister, Mildred Brooke Hoover, produced a regional three-volume set. In 1948, that incomparable Wells Fargo historian Ruth Teiser revised the story of the Golden State into one volume, and then in 1966, William N. Abeloe had the honors with the third edition. *Historic Spots* remains much more than a travel guide. It is a long, long history of the Golden State, 580 pages worth of text, presented county by county. Comparing the third and the fifth editions, parts of pages are familiar, but overall, the new is less dense and therefore easier reading than the old. Kyle's writing has a nice style to it.

Of course, Kyle notes a goodly number of SRLs [State Registered Landmarks], rivaled in number by those erections from a noble Gold Rush fraternal organization, E Clampus Vitus. Furthermore, he adds a twenty-five-page bibliography containing relevant books and journal articles published as late as 2000 for state, region, and county. Certain of his county histories contain long sub-stories, which are a delight unto themselves. For instance, Contra Costa and San Mateo describe ranchos and Spanish explorers, with the latter also having details on elegant mansions. Del Norte, Shasta, and Siskiyou have trails and mountains, while El Dorado glories in its Sierra roads and river bars, and Kern in stage-coaching. San Joaquin is blessed with old farm houses and river ferries, Inyo with borax, while Imperial owes its existence to desert reclamation.

Douglas Kyle and Stanford University deserve praise for timely revisions and continual printing of this California classic that keeps on giving. No library should be without it.

DR. ROBERT J. CHANDLER

Esteban José Martínez: His Voyage in 1779 to Supply Alta California, edited, translated into English, and transcribed in Spanish by Vivian Collins Fisher (Berkeley: The Bancroft Library, 2002), 272 pages.; charts, tables, and maps; 24 cm high; 26 cm wide, or 9/25 x 10.25 inches. Produced by Wilsted & Taylor; set in Bauer Bodoni; and printed on 80 pound Finch Opaque Vellum Vanilla. \$50, cloth.

Vivian C. Fisher's translation of Esteban José Martínez's 1779 sailing diary

stands out; the captain writes with a straight-forward verve. This handsome volume, produced by Wilsted & Taylor in a “landscape” format, includes a transcription of the original daily log now at The Bancroft Library. Fisher, alas, did not live to see the printed product, so it becomes her memorial. Well-honored Mike Mathes, noted BCC book creator and writer of articles for the *QN-L*, pays lavish tribute to the skills of this longtime Bancroftian.

A “perfectionist” she was, but this mighty strength brought weakness in a few areas. To Fisher’s everlasting credit are the presentations of Martínez’s manuscript in original Spanish and lively English, correction and elucidation of details, lists of supply (and exploration) voyages between 1769 and 1809, and the cargo carried on them. A cut-away diagram of the frigate *Santiago* and her sail plan, plus a well-plotted map of the voyage, are indispensable.

On the debit side, details bog down the introduction that Fisher writes in a passive voice. Like the *Santiago*, prefatory material is clunky. Furthermore, although Fisher acknowledges and apologizes, some of the Glossary’s nautical terms just elude her.

First, the picky-wocky stuff, but The Bancroft Library, the premier public research center on the Pacific Coast, should be held to a high standard.

Fisher twice states, “A maritime day began at 1 p.m. and concluded at noon the following day with an observation of the sun.” [Page 15, note 29; and Page 133, note 4]. No. All days have twenty-four hours. Just as the calendar day begins, to the nearest minute, at 12:01 a.m., so the nautical day begins twelve hours later, just after the Meridian, at 12:01 p.m.

Martinez merely jotted notes after the first hour at 1 p.m., and then every hour thereafter. Wilsted & Taylor put the captain’s figures on distance, heading, course, wind, and drift into a pale blue grid, matching a color used with good effect throughout the volume.

The Glossary defines “sprit” correctly as a spar angled from a mast to support the top of a fore-and-aft sail, such as on schooners, and a “spritsail” as one extended by a sprit, but these definitions are irrelevant.

As shown on the sail plan, the *Santiago* carried a specific square sail slung from the bowsprit. On April 28, 1779, Martínez wrote, “Today I ordered the spritsail lowered as well as its yard. It was put in the waist. The purpose was to alleviate the weight of the bowsprit, and because this is a sail that is of little use in these seas.”

Similarly, the Glossary defines “Topsail” as “the small sail set above the top-

mast." The sail plan presents the fore and main topsails as the largest the *Santiago* carried, extending the full length of the topmast, but not above it. These, plus the lower fore and main sails were the ship's standard clothing.

This minutia gains importance as Martínez was at sea for most of the ninety-four-page journal. He is a master at using anchors to keep from grounding, and juggles sails to find the *Santiago*'s best sailing points. On May 2, after three weeks at sea, Martínez determined the ship sailed just as well with the four prime sails as with all sails set. The next morning, he sent down the topgallant sails, yards, and masts, fearing the extra strain would carry away unreliable cedar topmasts. Martínez had so adjusted sailing and steering that on May 18, he exclaimed, "this ship is capable of following a voyage to the end of the world."

Martínez devotes much space in this log determining how far he had traveled, say thirty-five to sixty nautical miles a day, and most of all, finding where he was. Upon leaving San Blas, Mexico, on April 10, 1779, the *Santiago* headed far westward to catch prevailing winds. Good sailor as he was, Martínez watched for signs of land, shore birds, and kelp. On June 14, approaching the California coast, he recorded large numbers of gooseneck barnacles, not seen on previous trips. Right on the button, Martínez made landfall at Bodega Bay and shot down to the Golden Gate. Throughout the log, Martínez adds sailing directions for those who come after him.

A final quibble: I had been unaware of the ravages of Type-Lice until fine printer Patrick Reagh drew my attention to their mischief in my 2000 Joaquin Miller keepsake. The Glossary definition of "Peso" shows that the little critters had found the dreaded Peruvian "pisco" shipped aboard the *Santiago* instead of the promised fine Castilian *aguardiente*. "PESO: Currency; a measure of .1536 Troy ounces (2,762.20 grams). Composed of 96 *granos* or 8 *reales*."

I am baffled as to what the numbers meant, and former BCC director Peter Hanff confirms that the Type-Lice insidiously got into the original typescript. The Troy fraction is the weight of a sheet of paper; its equivalent is not a coin weighing 2.7 kilograms or 6 pounds. My fine Carolus III 1780 8-reales coin weighs 424 grains, or 0.883 Troy ounce, or 27.47 grams, and contains 902.7 fine silver; but enough of picky-wocky.

What can this 1779 sailing diary tell today's Californians of historic Alta California? With Fisher's background detail and sparkling translation, the answer is "Much!"

The Spanish naval department at San Blas took three years to build the seventy-seven-foot frigate *Santiago*, and Martínez, known as an experienced navigator, was aboard for her first voyage in 1774. The boxy ship had huge holds, well fitting her for a supply ship, but a deep draft. Quality was poor, but typical of the supply ships, according to Fisher's list of voyages. After all, San Blas was the exile post of the Spanish Navy. Fresh from the shipyard, the *Santiago* had a faulty rudder, while high seas leaked through the main deck gunports.

Still, Spanish colonists cheered her arrival again in 1775, 1777, and 1778. After this documented 1779 voyage, Martínez would take the *Santiago* on a final supply trip in 1780, this time, fearing English warships, with seventy men crowded aboard. In 1781, an official commandeered the readied supply ship for a run to Peru. The *Santiago* returned in 1783 to sail no more; Martínez ordered her broken up.

In 1779, Martínez competed with two larger, newer ships leaving on an exploratory voyage, and came out on the short end. The *Santiago* received the dregs of equipment and crew, and sailed with fifty-one men on April 10, 1779, well after the critical March departure date.

The naval yard seemed to have learned nothing since 1774. The *Santiago* left with one iron rudder strap bent so that it did not hang correctly on the pintle. Throughout the voyage the rudder in general and twisted iron straps in particular plagued the captain. Contributing to the backwater image of Spain's Pacific Coast possessions, the *Santiago* did not carry authorized iron-working tools. More surprising, the Presidio of San Francisco, a military post in need of much ironwork, had neither a forge nor blacksmithing tools. Yet, Martínez coped, making repairs as needed. The *Santiago* sailed on.

Through Fisher as an intermediary, Martínez is the star of this show. He trained a poor, small crew and accomplished his mission. On April 21, 1779, Martínez recorded, "at present 13 men of the crew are counted sick, whom I miss noticeably." Others, though, he did not miss at all. "Through their old age [they were] good for nothing but to eat." Four days later, thirty-one men, including officers, divided two watches into fifteen and sixteen hands respectively, to work the ship. On May 10, though, one man alone remained in sickbay, and throughout the six and one-half month voyage, Martínez had no deaths.

The shrewd captain also presents a picture of Spanish colonists during the first decade of settlement, and one wonders how they made it. After three years, the San Francisco Presidio colony had only nineteen men, seventeen women, and forty-

two children, with mules and carts scarce, and warehouses poor. The *Santiago*'s crew did most of the unloading. Much they brought was foodstuffs, which stands in sharp contrast with California's image as a bountiful garden now supporting thirty-five million people.

At Monterey in August 1779, Martínez loaded an unusual cargo for San Diego, seventy-three "pine logs," four feet in diameter and twenty feet long. The thickness suggests Santa Cruz redwoods rather than Monterey pines. On the way south, four Indian canoes, one from the coast and three from Santa Catalina Island, provided fresh fish for the crew in return for glass beads, tobacco, and sea biscuit. On September 8, 1779, firing the ship's gun brought out a simple but practical aid to navigation into San Diego harbor: the shoreside troops lit a huge bonfire.

Docked, a shortage of mules again stretched out unloading, but some of those seventy-three huge beams are probably still in Old Town San Diego State Park. After a month, "we weighed anchor," Martínez wrote, and, after firing the third departure shot, "I sailed out." Two weeks later, on October 26, 1779, the final entry read, "I cast the anchor in the usual anchorage, completing the commission charged to my care. Thanks be given to Most Holy Mary. ESTEBEN JOSÉ MARTINEZ."

DR. ROBERT J. CHANDLER

Serendipity

Musings of the Committee Chairman

We were reading a New York *Times* article, reprinted in the East Bay rag, but obviously not newsworthy to the San Francisco *Chronicle*, entitled, "Archivists and Historians Rush to Save Recall Items." The announced antics of the Chair of the BCC Publications Committee, whose name slips our memory now for his own protection, drew our attention. Said bibliographer of the Gold Rush "has taken to roaming the streets of Sacramento on his lunch breaks," reporter Michael Falcone revealed, "to scavenge for campaign memorabilia from rallies and events." All the while, the celestial head of the State Library, the brilliant Kevin Star, cheered on such "scrounging instincts," while "signs once taped to telephone poles or posters strewn on sidewalks are now enshrined in the library's permanent collection."

Well, there goes our reputation. We thought WE were the only one who went around with our trusty Boy Scout knife at the ready – the blade to slit tape; the awl to pry staples. We'd put out a contract on the unnamed Gary Kurutz, but then, the

contract itself would become collectible ephemera before it could be executed.

What of our early endeavors from 1965 to 1978 at the University of California Riverside and summer research at Berkeley? An unreasonable wife, between mutterings about an obsessive-compulsive member of the family, declared that our new-born daughter needed a bedroom and closet. Out went eleven vertical feet of string-bound leaflets, plus newspapers, to UCR Special Collections.

Reform? Never. Our pocket knife remains handy; our fingers adept at peeling stickers that have come into fashion the past few years. Only wallpaper paste stumps us—unless after a rain. Still, we are the only one we know who, in less than a year, can make round a bound flat 9 x 11 inch daily journal, scrapbook, and general ephemeral catch-all. [Note from the now-decrepit Berkeley Girl, a vignette from the 1960s on Campus: James D. Hart, Bancroft's Olympian Librarian, collecting Free Speech Movement leaflets from the many tables around Sproul Hall and Sather Gate, an expression of ineffable bliss on his scholarly face.]

As a collector of ephemera, we were admiring the business card of "Emmett Harrington, fine and rare books, 251 Post Street, Suite 312, San Francisco." Fleeting it is since BCC director Harrington is fleeing. The red rocks of St. George, Utah, on the old Las Vegas to Salt Lake trail, are calling. It's hard to beat twice the space at one-fifth the rent, but book lovers, do not mourn. Harrington's prized and praised catalogues on Western Americana will continue; our director even promises to commute to board meetings. Look for at least a Harrington booklist in January 2004.

In our profession, we subscribe to learned and scholarly journals. Whether we even read or comprehend articles, your deponent sayeth not. Yet, in the September *Journal of American History* [and to be precise, we add, Vol. 90, 555-575], Joan Shelley Rubin supplies "What is the History of the History of Books?" Of course, we make no pretense that we actually understood it, but Rubin provides a bibliographical, culturally-intertwined survey. Furthermore, she has kind words for September's Roxburgh Club speaker Megan L. Benton, author of *Beauty and the Book: Fine Editions and Cultural Distinction in America* (2000) – the topic of a previous Roxburgh Club talk and QN-L article, "Bound to Be Classics" (Winter 2001).

We wonder why whenever we discover "largely unmapped *terra incognita*" that former two-term BCC president Dick Dillon shows up? The versatile Dillon is teaching an eight-week class at University of San Francisco's [Alfred and Han-na] Fromm Institute for Lifelong Learning aimed at those over fifty years old. Dillon discourses on the exploratory expedition led by Meriwether Lewis and William

Clark to discover the extent of the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. For those who think of the gregarious former Sutro Librarian as only a California historian, his *Meriwether Lewis* (1965) won the Commonwealth Club's Gold Medal. Naturally, it is one of the texts. Now that our readers know Dillon quality, snap up *Napa Valley Heyday* on BCC publication next year!

While on heydays, Malcolm Margolin's Heyday Books, in conjunction with the California Historical Society, San Francisco State University, and the California Labor Federation, came out with a Labor Day publication. Editor Mark Dean Johnson, an art professor at the university, curated the exhibit behind the book. *At Work: The Art of California Labor* (\$35) is, in essence, art of the radical labor movement from the 1930s to the present. Many artists were "avowed communists" and veterans of "political street theater," but impressed by Mexico's public art program of the 1920s, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt instituted America's version during the Great Depression. "It seems just short of amazing that these [nationally] dispersed efforts by firebrand artists attracted such important support from Washington," Johnson ruminates. The first of many California projects was the Coit Tower murals. Well edited and organized, this work in itself is an important social document.

We read that a Bull Market may be returning—ah, that always winsome mirage "light at the end of the tunnel," which leads us to encourage all to maximize their investments. Nothing has greater value than Book Club publications, with a proven track record since 1914! Among those in stock are John De Pol's wood engravings, Joe D'Ambrosio's book-designing memoirs, and poet George Sterling's letters to critic A.G. Bierce. In fact, we might list seventeen available Book Club masterpieces all selling for less than \$100 – not to mention various past years' Keepsakes. The Holiday Season Rapidly Approaches!!

In 2004, expect WPA California Printmakers, and short books on wine pioneer John Ignatius Bleasdale and an invitation to join the rotund, champagne-swilling raconteur Ben Truman on a stagecoach. If you do not know who Truman is, a 1984 BCC production will inform you! William Matson Roth's memoir of Jane Grabhorn's Colt Press, 1938–1942, is slated to appear, a production of Andrew Hoyem's Arion Press. Oh yes, there is also coming a large book concerning a county between Sonoma and Lake. We hear it w[h]ines a lot.

Serendipitously for our deadline, a literate friend of ours – there are a few – gobbled up some stinging 1885 upcountry letters containing lines we intend to

promptly plagiarize. We are trusting that the author is sufficiently obscure that we will not be Stephen Ambrosed. Whoever this "A. G. Bierce" was, he greeted the editor of the *Wasp* cheekily on January 10: "Your sudden flitting was an astonisher, considering that you were not a bank cashier." Oh, to the South Seas with Wells Fargo cashier Charlie Banks!

In a vein we know our readers will ignore, as we hurriedly remind all that we do NOT live in San Francisco, this Bierce fellow continued, "People are very civil to me here [in Auburn]; I am invited to a hanging tomorrow." Pointedly, he pointed out, "I am not the person to be hanged. That's the difference between the mountains and the bay."

Replying to A.C. McFarlane's accusation of "despondency," A.G. Bierce on November 18, launched from Angwin [located in a Dillonious County] a long disquisition describing his constant good humor: "I am a pessimist of the most untamed sort, I fear," he proclaimed, "but it is a mistake to suppose the damned worthlessness of mankind is important enough to grieve me. They may be worthless 'to hell and gone' for ought I care; my mental condition and frame of feeling are not accessible to their contagion. O no – I'm cheerful enough, and the 'country air' which you basely slander is congenial to my spiritual being."

I wonder if this guy ever had "Bitter" attached his name? Perhaps picking up Dr. Roger Larson's *Dear Master* would help me identify this otherwise unread Ambrose Gwinett Bierce.

The *Bay Guardian* of July 9, 2003, carried a letter from Sandor Burstein, the ultimate Carollian, who took gentle exception to remarks in a book review of "a collection of Lewis Carroll's erotic photographs of naked young girls." Said Burstein, "To ascribe 'eroticism' to these photos is a great stretch." Furthermore, in a lifetime study of mathematician Charles Dodgson, he had "never heard of any 'reputed' censored parts of *Alice in Wonderland*." The *Guardian* writer brushed him off. Perhaps similar dismissals fueled our 1885 writer's joyful melancholy.

Talk about weird names. If you were born Cincinnatus Hiner Miller, what would you do? We can hear chants arising from school yards: "Hiner, Hiner, Hiner! He'll never make a miner; Hiner, Hiner, Hiner! He is such a whiner; Hiner, Hiner, Hiner, Use his pants for a birdcage liner!" Even a Mexican murderer's moniker would be better. So, with an assist from California poet Ina Coolbrith, Joaquin Miller emerged. However, foundations remain foggy about this flamboyant figure, forcing scholars to sail on, and on, and on. Yet, a beacon from Southern Oregon

lights a flickering trail. A call for papers has gone out. From Thursday, October 7, to Saturday, October 9, 2004, at the Southern Oregon University in Ashland, a conference will construct and deconstruct the Poet of the Sierras. For details see www.joaquinmiller.net

Have you been to the renovated Ferry Building at the foot of San Francisco's Market Street? Gorgeous through its refreshment and removal of the ungainly Embarcadero Freeway. Go. Besides fresh food, Book Passage of Corte Madera adds inducement. The mother store holds seven hundred readings annually; the off-spring, opened in October, naturally intends to show up the parent.

Selling books is not easy. We enjoyed a J.S. Holliday story in the *Chronicle* of July 12, from Adair Lara's pen.

Holliday drove from Carmel to Roseville for an advertised reading, arriving to find mike, podium, chairs, and thirty copies of *Rush for Riches: Gold Fever and the Making of California*, (1999), his sesquicentennial history to accompany an Oakland Museum exhibit. All requirements were at hand but one: an audience. When no invitation came over the loudspeaker, Holliday corralled a half dozen shoppers through promise of "a rousing speech"—well delivered, naturally, and convinced five to buy books. Holliday then autographed the remaining twenty-five. "You've torn the bar code off!" the clerk shuddered in horror. "We need that to sell the book!" The chastened author collected shrink-wrap fragments carrying the required information. The result? All sold, and the store reordered.

Holliday could hold his own with that master showman, P.T. Barnum. We recall a presentation earlier this year when Southern Pacific Railroad historian Richard Orsi, no slouch himself, declared, "I am going first. No one should have to follow Jim Holliday."

Here it was October 5th already, and we were fearful of being Whip-pled into shape as the Managing Editor greeted our excuses through praise for her favorite [AW: ???] British playwright, George Bernard PSHAW! A New Yorker we met yesterday reflected on our political scene, "None of this would be happening if Gray Davis were alive." Further ruminations came today when we met the son of Sacramento vice principal, Leslie C. Browne, who had cleared a classroom from the danger of a shotgun-toting classmate. OK, we admit it; we were playing hide-and-seek with Browne's six-year-old grandson. Browne had acted quickly and responsibly, drawing on twenty-five years with the Los Angeles Police Department, "Don't ever get caught doing nothing."

We are always doing something, including being drawn to an article in the Old Chron, "Ghostwriter's skill is knowing almost nothing about his subjects." We thought that fitted us to a "T." We should therefore have the appropriate commemorative T-shirt made, plus we are drawn to spirits, ardent. Certainly by now, all readers know that we are "up the river without a paddle," and despair of our ever getting steam so that we may set a course. All who like such progress should enjoy David Hull's keepsake, *Steam Navigation above the Carquinez Strait*. Remember that any steamboat shenanigans that took place above the Straits, also occurred in the Bay. We close – rejoicing that we have not yet been Recalled.

ROBERT J. CHANDLER



We learn from the American Academy of Bookbinding in Telluride, Colorado, that its first two graduates are Cathy Adelman, Book Club member from Malibu, California, and Jeffrey Altepeter of Somerville, Massachusetts. These two are to be congratulated on receiving diplomas in professional bookbinding after five years of course work. In addition, they completed over twenty bindings, judged by a redoubtable group: Tini Miura, Einen Miura, Daniel Tucker, the Book Club of California's Eleanore Ramsey, Monique Lallier, and Frank Mowery. For information about the program, founded in 1993, telephone 970-728-3886.



Anyone who attended the Oak Knoll Fest in early October probably had the good fortune to see David Esslemont's latest, a collaboration with Gaylord Schanilec, *Ink on the Elbow*. This book comprises a series of conversations between the two, mostly about making books. It is one hundred fifty-five pages, illustrated with color linocuts, engravings, tipped-in images and sample pages from the books of each. It is a co-publication of Esslemont's Solmentes Press (Powys, Wales) and Schanilec's Midnight Paper Sales (Wisconsin), and half the edition of two hundred is bound by each artist. For more details, and truly tempting pictures, visit Mr. Esslemont's web site: www.solmentes.com



George Dowley sent us a highly interesting article from *U.S. News & World Report* (Science & Society, 9/1/03) – "A Man of Letters: If you like what you read, you

should thank Matthew Carter,” by Ulrich Boser. That Carter’s career and achievements in typography appear in such a widely-circulated weekly, sympathetically detailed, is good news. Carter is quoted: “If the reader is conscious of the type, it’s almost always a problem.” A traveling exhibit, “Typographically Speaking: The Art of Matthew Carter,” opened in September at the University of Pennsylvania. Peggy Re, curator, declared: “He will be considered one of the foremost type designers of the 20th century, if not also the 21st century.” Design critic and graphic artist Steven Heller was quoted as calling Carter “the quintessential craftsman,” one who can “take the classical, the traditions of typography, and bring them into the 21st century without seeming trendy.” The article notes that in the 1950s, there were only a few hundred fonts in the Latin alphabet, but that now more than forty thousand are available. “I used to be afraid of people asking me at dinner parties what I do for a living,” Carter says. ‘Now it amazes me that I can have a perfectly intelligent conversation about fonts with a 9-year-old.’” Exciting typographic times!



Good news if you have saved your issues of Joe D’Ambrosio’s *Artists’ Book Reviews*: Mr. D’Ambrosio has devised a very attractive clamshell box to hold them all, with pockets for the keepsakes. Each is fabricated to order, using a special paper in which a grid of cords is embedded; for information, or to start a subscription to *ABR*, telephone him at 602-550-5761.



Don’t fail to see the exhibit in the Club’s rooms through January 9, 2004: “Degas and Me: Books and Works on Paper by Charles Hobson.”

Exhibition Notes

From September 8 to October 31, 2003, full runs of two extraordinary contemporary journals devoted to printing, the graphic arts, book history, and related news were on view at The Book Club Of California. The title of this exhibition, “*Matrix Comes of Age & Parenthesis Is Born*,” caused Dennis Hall, *Parenthesis*’s British editor, to comment that “at 5 years it seems to have been a long birth pang for *Parenthesis*.” Yet, as Book Club member Norman McKnight remarked as we were putting up the exhibition, “*Parenthesis* seems to be coming into its own – finally.”

The first issue of *Parenthesis*, *The Newsletter of The Fine Press Book Association*, is dated May 1998. The work of an international panel of printers, writers and editors – all on a shoestring budget – was not easy. Patience and good will have overcome many difficulties. Alternate issues are now edited and printed by Dennis Hall, proprietor of Handborough Books and Previous Parrot Press near Oxford, and by Crispin and Jan Elsted, proprietors of Barbarian Press in Mission, British Columbia. *Parenthesis 8* arrived as the exhibition was being mounted – and it did seem more attractive, bigger, and more colorful than any of the earlier issues.

Thanks to the generosity of the late Stephen Gale Herrick, the Book Club of California owns a full run of *Matrix: A Review for Printers & Bibliophiles*, even the almost impossible to find volumes 3 and 4. *Matrix* is printed at the Whittington Press, among the charms of the Cotswold countryside, at Lower Marston Farm, near Risbury, Leominster, Herefordshire.

Included in this exhibition were regular and some hardbound “special” copies, as well as handbills, announcements, catalogues, and posters. *Matrix* is not so much a journal as a book-length (averaging some 250 pages) compendium of articles and book reviews written by the most pre-eminent scholars in various fields related to printing and books. Unlike *Parenthesis*, *Matrix* carries no advertising. It is lavishly illustrated with tipped- or bound-in photographs, lithographs, woodcuts, and facsimiles or ephemera made up in a variety of engraving techniques. Each issue contains such “an embarrassment of riches” that I am reminded of what Denys Hays had written in his preface to *Printing and the Mind of Man*:

Authors are not like children, content to see their beautiful pebbles flung into the pool of eternity. Perhaps some day it may be possible to devise ways of recapturing the flying words and images of the past. Until that happens there will be no substitute for print, and the book will remain the only way by which one sage can speak to another.

As this *Quarterly News-Letter* goes to press, John Randle and his wife, Rosalyn, the creators of *Matrix*, are putting the finishing touches on *Matrix 23*. For over twenty years now, subscribers have looked forward to the journal’s yearly arrival. When a new *Matrix* arrives, I must stop what I am doing, pour out a glass of wine, and find a comfortable place in which to read as much as I can in one sitting. A musical background always seems apropos while fascinating words and exciting images jump out at me like those “beautiful pebbles cast into the pool of eternity.”

In 1993 I reviewed *Matrix* for the *Quarterly News-Letter*.^{*} Ten years later, as I take old volumes down from the shelf and rediscover their delightful surprises, I realize that nothing has changed in my admiration for this, the best-ever review for printers and bibliophiles:

M

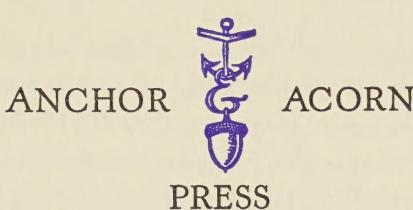
My personal copy of *Matrix 13* has just arrived – it is Christmas all over again! Why? The cover of this 234-page volume and eight of its pages are *en pochoir* by Peter Allen. There is an insert colored by the “aqua-type” at Epinal, and an article by Roderick Cave on Gordon Craig, and sixteen of Craig’s wood engravings! Here is Maureen Richardson’s “Paper Makes Money Makes Paper” – all about recycling shredded Bank of England notes, with a tipped-in sample – and the second installment of an article on ceremonial Chinese papers including several luscious samples. Sebastian Carter’s “A Printer’s Dilemma: Introducing *A Printer’s Dozen*,” is followed by John Randle’s review of two new poems by Philip Gallo: “What T. S. Elliot did for cats, Philip Gallo has surely done for printers.”

I am charmed and yet chagrined: my copy is one of the 835 bound in “stiff covers.” I lust mightily after one of the nineteen “quarter-bound in Oasis leather and paper marbled by Colleen Gryspeerdt.” *Matrix 13* is set in Caslon, Goudy Modern, Van Dijck, and Cochin, and is printed on a creamy Sommerville Laid and fine Zerkall mould-made papers. Is it expensive? Should we – avowed lovers of the book beautiful and the poetry of handsome printed and illustrated pages, confirmed seekers after the history and love of type – put our money where are mouths are? You betcha! I am reminded, yet again, of William Carlos Williams’s poem, a paean to another art, which, let’s get it right, may share some of its generous “soul” with printing.

*It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.*

DR. ADELA SPINDLER ROATCAP

* The Book Club of California’s *Quarterly News-Letter*, Volume LIX, Number 2, Spring 1994, pp. 57–58.



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Publication Notes

The Arion Press is hard at work on a memoir of the Colt Press written by Club member William Matson Roth, who worked with Jane Grabhorn. Everyone hopes that the book will be out or nearly so by December, when Mr. Roth will be able to be present in San Francisco for a publication celebration. We expect a wonderful book and an event to match.

Gifts & Acquisitions

The Book Club has just acquired *Type and Typography: Highlights from Matrix*, published by Mark Batty. The book is a good compilation of articles taken from the renowned journal *Matrix*, compiled by the Whittington Press. This book provides an easy way to find many of the articles you are looking for on typography all in one place. It is a well-made, attractive volume and covers the most important people, places, and things.

B.J. LAND



Msgr. Francis J. Weber has sent us his two latest from the Saint Francis Historical Society, Mission Hills, California: *A Tradition of Outreach: Examples of Catholic Action in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles* and *Requiescant in Pace: The Story of Catholic Cemeteries in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles* (both 2003, soft covers, both illustrated). As usual, Msgr. Weber makes fascinating history from surprising and sometimes obscure material. For example, the Ancient Order of Hibernians was established in Los Angeles in 1875, but its history goes back to sixteenth-century Leinster, where Rory O'Moore and followers resisted the English invaders. The Order played a notably charitable role at the time of the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco, promptly raising \$40,000 on behalf of those left homeless by the disaster. Of even greater antiquity are the Knights of Malta, who trace their origins to the eleventh-century Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem – today they maintain a free clinic in Los Angeles, among other charitable activities. Responding to

a war-time need in 1944, the Mobile Chapel Car was launched in 1944 to benefit members of the armed forces. The landmarks of Msgr. Weber's second work offer equally fascinating Southern Californian glimpses – even cemeteries and columbaria have their human-interest stories.

We are also grateful to Douglas C. Johns for *Publications of Dawson's Book Shop*, a checklist compiled by him and Dennis Kruska and published by Johns' Western Gallery, San Francisco, 2003. Ours is copy No. 10 of 100 signed by Glen and Muir Dawson. Illustrations and an index complete this survey of an impressive history of Southern California publishing and printing—the first entry dates from 1906.

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Special Query – The Master of Palindromes, and sometime contributor to this *Quarterly* on Porter Garnett studies, wonders if anyone has seen Garnett's famous SATOR-AREPO-TENET-OPERA-ROTA S palindrome carved anywhere as an inscription. Contact him at: Wilder Bentley, Post Office Box 575, Occidental, California 95465.

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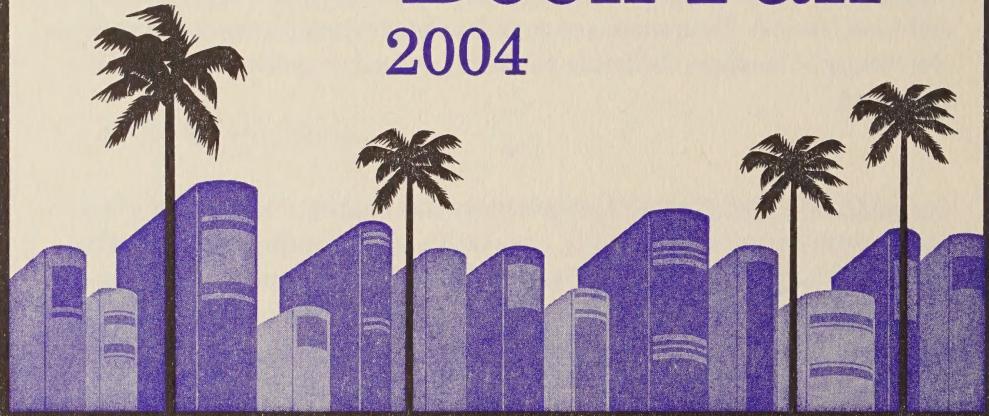
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